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Tuesday, March 16, 2010

THE MORNING NEWS

Your Source for Local News in English

Caya G. F. Betico Croes 111 - Tel: 588-9517 - Fax: 588-9518 - E-mail: themorningnewsaruba@gmail.com

It's official! Aruba says "Good Morning" to THE MORNING NEWS!



When Aruba's first commercial English newspaper, THE NEWS, closed its doors on October 30, 2009, after 58 years, many mourned its demise. The veteran editorial staff of the paper, consisting of Rosalinda Maduro and Chandette Richardson, along with administrator Ingrid Does and graphic designer Milton Jones, were undaunted in their determination to continue publishing a daily English publication, diverse in its subject matter and of interest to both Aruban visitors and residents.

Aruba's Minister of Tourism, Transport and Labor, Otmar Oduber, declared he was proud to have the honor of cutting the ribbon of the offices of THE MORNING NEWS, located on the Caya

Betico Croes in Oranjestad, yesterday morning.

Colleagues, friends and family were present to wish them well in their venture, along with all the staff. These include Rosalie Klein, reporter/photographer, Yvonne Kromhout, Head of PR/Sales and Marketing department along with Sales Reps. Yanis Garcia, and Peggy Croes and Susana Schwengle and her sister Lydia with Andrea Jones in Distribution.

Working peripherally with THE MORNING NEWS is Hector Marcelo Mercado of SIS Mercado, handling their online edition, allowing fans of Aruba to easily keep up on island happenings even when they are far away.

Continued on Page 3



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Stubborn storm darkens, floods much of Northeast

BOUND BROOK, New Jersey – Torrential rains and high winds pounded the Northeast for a third day yesterday, taking a heavy toll on people and property in a region that only recently restored power or finished digging out from the last of several major winter storms.

The rain and accompanying wind have toppled trees, flooded roads and forced hundreds of people to evacuate their homes. At least nine people have died in storm-related accidents, and nearly a half-million people lost power at the peak of the storm in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut.

In Boston, the storm threatened to overwhelm the wastewater system, forcing officials to begin a controlled release of untreated wastewater into

Boston Harbor.

Some parts of Maine received as much as eight inches of rain, and utility officials blamed high winds for broken tree limbs that fell on power lines and caused outages in the eastern towns of Deer Isle and Stonington.

The ferocious storm led to near-record numbers of 911 calls in New York. New York City experienced its second-highest volume of 911 calls ever.

There also were road closures in southeastern New Hampshire due to flooding. In New Jersey, Gov. Chris Christie declared a state of emergency, allowing National Guard troops to be called up if needed. Schools closed in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York yesterday.

U.S. transfers prison, 2,900 ex-insurgents to Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The U.S. military handed over a \$107 million prison and nearly 3,000 inmates to the Iraqi government yesterday as it prepares to leave Iraq seven years after ousting Saddam Hussein.

The formal transfer of the detention center at Camp Taji, a sprawling U.S. base north of Baghdad, is part of a plan to unwind a U.S. detention program in Iraq that cost \$500 million a year at its peak.

U.S. forces had taken into custody about 90,000 people since the 2003 invasion. By August, there will only be about 100 in U.S. custody, said Major General David Quantock, head of detention operations.

"At one point our guard force was over 10,000 and now we're going to go to a guard force of around 100 by the first of September, all part of the responsible drawdown plan to get U.S. forces down to 50,000," he said.

The U.S. detention centers in Iraq were being closed or transferred to the Iraqi government under a bilateral security pact signed by Iraq and the United States in 2008. The largest, Camp Bucca in the southern desert near Kuwait, was shut down last September.

The last, Camp Cropper located near Baghdad airport, will be turned over to Iraq on July 15, Quantock said

Israel vows more settlement building despite crisis with US

JERUSALEM, Israel – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday settlement building in east Jerusalem would continue, in a move likely to further heighten tensions with key ally the United States.

Western-backed Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas responded by saying he would not return to peace talks without a complete settlements freeze.

The US State Department declined to comment on the hawkish Israeli premier's remarks, saying it was awaiting a "formal" response.

US sends FBI to probe consular slayings in Mexico

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico – Faced with a brazen challenge from drug cartels, US FBI agents have joined a Mexican probe into attacks on US consular staff and their families that left three dead in this border city, officials said yesterday.

Mexican authorities blamed the drive-by murders of an American employee of the US consulate, her husband and the husband of a Mexican consular

Paedophile party disbands

AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands -- The highly controversial political party for Brotherly Love, Freedom and Diversity, more commonly known in the Netherlands as the 'Paedophile party,' is to disband.

Chairman Marthijn Uittenbogaard founded the movement in 2006. It has advocated lowering the minimum age for sex with minors to 12 years and the legalisation of child pornography. This controversial program was condemned both in the Netherlands and abroad.

The party was unable to participate in the Dutch general election of 2006 because it failed to collect enough declarations of support to be included on the ballot papers. The movement was disbanded after the members realised they would again be unable to collect enough signatures to participate in the general election in June this year.

Announcement

Closed due to funeral

W.E.B. Aruba N.V. announces that it will be closed on Wednesday, 17th of March from 10 a.m. till 12 noon. All services in the afternoon will follow regular opening hours.



employee on "the Aztecas," a gang linked to the powerful Juarez drug cartel.

But investigators said it was still unclear why they were singled out by hit teams who ambushed the two family groups just minutes apart Saturday after they left a birthday party in Ciudad Juarez.

"It could be a mistaken identity, it could be that they were targeted; we don't know at this point," said special agent Andrea Simmons, a spokesperson for the FBI's El Paso, Texas, office just across the border from Ciudad Juarez.

She said seven or eight agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation had joined the investigation along with agents

from the US Drug Enforcement Agency and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

An official with Mexico's Chihuahua state prosecutors' office also confirmed that "various FBI agents are in Ciudad Juarez to help in the investigation."

In Washington, State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said the Ciudad Juarez consulate, one of the largest such US facilities in the world, would remain closed today as it undergoes a security review.

The city's mayor told reporters here that security had recently been beefed up at the consulate following a bomb threat.

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Aruba says good morning ...

Continued from page 1

A tradition of accurate reporting items of interest to both tourists and locals will be punctuated with international news and special features addressing many interest groups. Those wishing to improve their business will find great advice in the columns by Ken Varga. A marketing guru and long time visitor to Aruba from the U.S., he has been featured on the cover of Mentor magazine and is sought after by wily businessmen around the world for his guidance. In October, the paper will host a seminar with Ken for their advertisers wishing to improve their businesses.

Another weekly feature will be "Ban Keiro (Come tripping in the Cunucu) with Madi

Kock, every Monday. Madi comes from five generations of islanders and has her roots deep in the community. Her column of island folklore, traditions, remedies and such, offer a peek at authentic island life, and aspects of Aruba little seen on the tourist scene.

"Aruba needs a newspaper like THE MORNING NEWS," commented Minister Oduber. "I personally believe there are many, many island residents who enjoy reading what is going on in tourism, and the islanders need to be educated, and be in touch with what their tourism managers are doing. A media source such as this is important to all of us. I wish all those involved great success in their new venture."

Stop evicting illegal families, Holland told

AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands -- The Netherlands is continuing to break EU conventions by leaving families with children whose requests for asylum have been rejected to fend for themselves on the streets, the Volkskrant reported yesterday.

At the end of last month, the European Committee on Social Rights said the Netherlands must stop evicting families with young children from asylum seekers centers because this conflicted with the European social charter and other human rights legislation.

The charter guarantees the rights of children to protection and a roof over their heads, whatever their legal status. The complaint against the Netherlands was brought by the Defence for Children lobby group in 2008.

The Volkskrant says several hundred families with children are evicted from refugee centers every year.

However, the Netherlands is not planning to amend its

rules until it has discussed the issue with the Council of Europe, but that meeting will not take place for several months, the paper says.

Defence for Children lawyer Carla van Os told the paper the Netherlands is dragging its feet unnecessarily. "The conclusion is very clear. You cannot dump children on the street. The ruling is binding and the rest of the Council of Europe has nothing to say about the matter," Van Os said.

The justice ministry says it cannot change the current situation immediately for 'procedural reasons,' and lawyers are now working to establish jurisprudence, the paper says.

For example, lawyer Pim Fischer is currently dealing with two families left on Emmen station and told to find their way home.

Junior justice minister Nebahat Albayrak has also ordered local councils to close their emergency accommodation for failed asylum seeker families.

Venezuela-run Isla refinery down until at least April

CARACAS, Venezuela--The Isla refinery on the Dutch island of Curaçao, which is operated by Venezuela's state oil firm, entered its third week without production and an official said yesterday it will be at least until April before production returns.

"When it will re-start, I can't tell you because I don't know," said the official at the refinery, who asked not to be identified. "But it definitely won't be until at least April. For March, there

will be no production."

The refinery, owned by the Curacao government and operated since 1985 by Petroleos de Venezuela, or PDVSA, has been completely shut down since March 1 after a power outage caused serious damage to key air compressors.

The plant has a capacity to process 320,000 barrels a day of crude, but over the past year has averaged closer to 220,000 barrels a day, the refinery official said.

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BRUNCH - LUNCH - MEETINGS - DINNER

Prime Minister Mike Eman and Minister Benny Sevinger meet with bankers



Aruba Prime Minister mr. Mike Eman and Minister of Infrastructure Benny Sevinger met with the bankers of Aruba to present to them the plans the Aruba government has on the enterprising project "City Renewal" and at the same time give an explanation of what those plans enclose.

Cabinet Eman started with a program "Bo Aruba" - Your Aruba, not only to execute the project, but also to involve the Aruban citizen, so they can be proud of those projects.

The program "Bo Aruba" focuses mostly on new roads, the renovation of downtown and the improvement of the neighborhoods. For the renovation of downtown a plan was put together for the streets, the Court Building, and modernization of the historical center of Oranjestad, including construction of a new Government Office. The plans also enclose upgrading the streets of San Nicolas, moving and upgrading the container harbor from, and improving around the lagoon. The FDA funds will finance those projects.



The local bankers were very impressed and enthusiastic with the presentation. Prime Minister Eman asked the

bankers to be pro active in this project by being flexible when investors ask for financing.

Idea's Flower Shop welcomes a new owner and new ideas!



Owner Oscar shows off one of his beautiful creations



Idea's Flower Shop is a well-known name on Aruba, but it will now see a revitalization of creativity, as noted landscaper and floral arranger Oscar Cueller has realized his dream of being master of a design center of his own.

Oscar welcomed friends and family for the grand opening on Saturday, March 13 at the cozy shop located in the heart of downtown Oranjestad on the Middenweg #10, one block in from Caya Betico Croes and away from the Aruba Bank.

Oscar, the mastermind behind the stunning landscaping of the Hyatt Regency Resort in Palm Beach, promises floral arrangements with contemporary flair, both natural and artificial. Indeed, the various bouquets displayed around his shop during the opening brought exclamations of surprise from his guests when they discovered they were made from silk flowers and other artificial materials, as they were so realistic and rich in color. Oscar

maintains he uses only the finest quality components to produce his masterpieces.

Whether seeking a natural bouquet for a particular occasion, or a beautiful and unique artificial arrangement to become a permanent part of the home décor, Idea's Flower Shop now offers a diverse selection of preset or customized designs.

For more information, contact Idea's Flower Shop at telephone 583-2108 or e-mail ideasflowershop@setarnet.aw.

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Rielle Hunter upset about racy 'GQ' photos, says Barbara Walters

On The View this morning, Barbara Walters said Rielle Hunter, the mistress of former presidential candidate John Edwards, had called her in tears over the suggestive nature of some of the photos accompanying Hunter's lengthy GQ profile. Hunter told Walters she had screamed for two hours upon seeing photos that show her bare-legged on a bed, wearing only a man's white dress shirt ("John's shirt?" quipped Elisabeth Hasselbeck) and a

pearl necklace. Hunter told Walters she had trusted the photographer, Mark Seliger, and believed him when he told her "he thought there might be one" usable shot that showed her being sexy.

Now, if Rielle had watched 30 Rock, she'd know that you should never agree to the use of props unless you want to see them again in print. They always use the shots with props!

Are you "Lysol-ing" yourself yet, like Whoopi?

Human egg being raffled off by clinic

LONDON-- A London fertility clinic says the winner of its new raffle will receive a human egg whose donor can be selected based on a number of attributes.

The Bridge Center, a London fertility clinic, said the raffle winner can determine which egg donor to use by analyzing donors' education, racial background and upbringing, The Sunday Times of London reported.

The clinic is offering a new service that circumvents the current in vitro fertilization laws in the United Kingdom.

The service is oriented toward women whose own eggs offer them little chance at a successful pregnancy via fertility treatments, The Times said.

Wednesday's raffle by the London site represents a promotion between the clinic and the Genetics and IVF Institute in Fairfax, Va.

Under British law, payments for fertility services are restricted to limit profits and all donors must agree to be identified in case any potential offspring of at least 18 years of age wish to contact them.

A true hero of Aruba's tourism... Divi Phoenix Resort now boasts Pedro Vargas as Rooms Division Manager



In 2009, a series of articles was printed, showcasing individuals on Aruba who merited the title "Hero (or Heroine) of Tourism" for their sincere dedication to providing the best vacation experience possible for visitors to Aruba. Certainly this title is well deserved by Pedro Vargas, who assumed the position of Rooms Division Manager at the Divi Phoenix Resort at the end of February.

Many may recognize Pedro, who came to Aruba in 1991 from Colombia, as he has held positions at Costa Linda, the Occidental Resort and Marriott Ocean Club, as well as eight years at the Radisson Aruba Resort, Spa and Casino as Reservations and Revenues Manager. However, it is tenure with The Aruban Resort, and his actions after the abrupt closing and bankruptcy announcements in December of 2009, where he was truly tested showed his mettle.

As 2009 drew to a close, Aruban Resort employees continued to serve the guests despite going three months without their salaries, believing the promise that new receivers of the property would continue operations, as this had happened previously when it was purchased from La Cabana, years before.

Unfortunately, this was not the case, and on December 12, The Aruban closed its doors, and on December 14, KL Management, operating out of Chicago, was declared bankrupt. This left thousands of people, both owners and those with confirmed reservations with the resort for the holiday season, stranded without accommodations.

Mindful of his fulfilling his duties and obligations to guests, Pedro volunteered to find all those expecting to spend the holidays in Aruba a place to stay, without any thought of remuneration. The Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association, AHATA, set him up in an office with computers and telephone lines, and he was joined by Jenny Rodgers and Mildred Dabian, who also volunteered in accomplishing this monumental task. For two weeks, they donated their time, juggled 300 bookings, and found places for the all they could contact at various resorts and guesthouses around the island.

A timeshare owner at The Aruban Resort, Lynn Holiday, wrote "You are so professional, and caring, and dedicated. This is what all of us love so much about Aruba and The Aruban. I think every one of us at one time or another has said that "renovation or no renovation, we love the resort because of the wonderful people who work there." Diane and Ed Binzal, who also owned a unit during Christmas week, told Pedro "We think it is wonderful what you are doing. Wish there were more people like you in the world."

Pedro's selfless dedication to the quality of Aruba's tourism product brought him to the attention of Sanju Luidens and Doreen Kralick of AHATA, and they recommended him to Divi Properties General Manager on Aruba, Alex Neiuwmeier, when he was looking for someone to replace Doug Kuhn, who returned to the States when his permit expired.

Pedro reports he is thrilled

about taking a position with Divi Properties, particularly at the Phoenix Resort, which recently completed their new Beach Suites. "Divi was always a name I would be happy to be associated with; it is very exciting to me to be on staff of such a stunning, world-class facility," he stated during a chat with THE MORNING NEWS at the lovely new Pure Beach restaurant.

"It is a very exciting time to join Divi Phoenix staff in a managerial position," Pedro confided, "I see stimulating challenges and enormous opportunity for advancement and expanded responsibilities. Now that they have opened this stunning new section, we are also faced with the former area, which was a design inherited with the purchase. The new section is Divi Properties' vision in what they consider a dream resort; I am excited to be part of the effort to bring the older section online with this new facility."

The Divi Phoenix Beach Suites are now fully operational; they recently revealed a sumptuous new lobby with only a few finishing touches left to the final product. Pedro reports sales are going well, as the interiors are impressive and the pool deck, spectacular. "I see among the owners in the older section no envy, as they harbor a camaraderie and sense of family as I have seen at no other resort."

"What I am particularly pleased about is the staff reaction to my taking this position," continued Pedro. "I first met with each employee individually and then we had our first group meeting. Their very positive reception to my mission and vision for the resort is highly encouraging and motivating. I had many expectations when I took the position, but I have to say, honestly, they have been filled beyond what I had hoped. I have a first class team and I feel they understand what I wish to achieve here and feel stimulated by the challenge. More than that, they were so authentically welcoming; I really feel I am working among friends. I see all that has happened over the past six months as a learning experience with the most positive result," he concluded.

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Continental Airlines to charge for food



ATLANTA, Georgia – Continental Airlines is ending free hamburgers, barbecue and sandwich rolls for many of its passengers in favor of a food-for-sale program that mirrors what other carriers are already doing.

A spokesman said yesterday that the airline, based in Houston, expects a \$35 million annual benefit, from cost savings and added revenue.

Delta Air Lines, American Airlines, US Airways and

United Airlines are among carriers that already charge for food on flights.

Continental passengers on some international routes, on domestic flights over six hours and those who sit in first or business class on routes worldwide will continue to get free food. Snacks like pretzels and nonalcoholic drinks will continue to be offered for free.

The changes take effect in the fall. Menu choices and prices will be disclosed later.

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Science/Tech

Bouncing Back: Why Some People Get Over Spats Quickly

Fighting with a spouse or significant other is generally a downer. But how easily a person bounces back after the conflict can be predicted by activity in a specific region of the brain, a new study finds.

The results show that after couples fight, those with high activity in a certain outer brain region are less likely to be upset the next day, while those with low activity are more likely to be in a bad mood, continue to mull over the argument in their heads, and turn to alcohol or drugs.

The study is unique in that it relied on experiments outside the laboratory to look at how activity in the lateral prefrontal cortex - part of the brain's outside layer - relates to responses to real-life situations.

The lateral prefrontal cortex is thought to be involved in the way people control their emotions, with more activity linked to more emotional resilience. For instance, people are less distressed by gruesome pictures if they have high activity in this region. And malfunctions in this brain area could be involved in psychiatric disorders, such as bipolar disorder.

The current study enrolled 27 participants who had been dating a partner for at least



three months (11 subjects were couples, and 5 had partners who did not take part in the research).

They had their brains scanned while looking at images of their significant other posing with various facial expressions: positive (happy, flirty, caring, pleasantly surprised), negative (anger, disgust, disappointment, contempt), and neutral.

The participants also kept an online diary for three weeks, and noted any fights and their moods following an argument.

In general, the subjects' lateral prefrontal cortex showed more activity when looking at the negative and positive facial expression compared with the neutral one.

The subjects' brain activity predicted how they reacted after their arguments. Those who showed less brain activity while looking at their partners' negative facial

expression were more likely to report a negative mood the next day along with substance use and thoughts of the argument, while the opposite was true for those with high brain activity.

When there wasn't an argument, there was no relationship between brain activity and mood and behavior. The results held even after the researchers accounted for whether or not the subjects were prone to negative moods.

"The key factor is that the brain activity in the scanner predicted their experience in life," said study author Christine Hooker, a psychologist at Harvard University. "Scientists believe that what we are looking at in the scanner has relevance to daily life, but obviously we don't live our lives in a scanner. If we can connect what we see in the scanner to somebody's day-to-day emotion-regulation capacity, it could help psychologists predict how well people will respond to stressful events in their lives."

Since the findings were based on subjects' self-reports, more research is needed to examine the link.

The results were published in the March issue of the journal *Biological Psychiatry*.

Google says China talks continue, but pullout signs grow

SHANGHAI/BEIJING — Google said on Monday it remained in talks with the Chinese government about censorship of its Chinese-language search portal, despite mounting signs the company could soon shut the site.

Google Inc, the world's biggest search engine, has been in a two-month standoff with Beijing over restrictions on the Internet and Google's claims that it and other companies were hit by hacking from within China.

The company's chief executive, Eric Schmidt, said last week he hoped to announce soon an outcome from talks with Chinese officials on offering an uncensored search engine in that country of 384 million Internet users.

Many experts have doubted China's ruling Communist Party would compromise on censorship, and on the weekend the Financial Times reported the talks had reached an impasse and Google was "99.9 percent" certain to shut its Chinese

search engine, Google.cn.

"Our forecast has always remained firm that once Google announced it would not accept censorship, then it was nearly impossible to imagine a scenario either where Google didn't act on that or the government accepted their position," Mark Natkin, managing director of Marbridge Consulting, told Reuters.

Marbridge Consulting is a Beijing-based company that advises on China's IT and telecommunications sectors.

A Google spokesperson said on Monday talks with Chinese authorities had not ended, but added that the company was adamant about not accepting self-censorship.

"We've been very clear that we are no longer going to self-censor our search results," the spokesperson told Reuters. The spokesperson commented on condition of anonymity, citing company policy.

"We are in active discussions with the Chinese gov-

ernment, but we are not going to engage in a running commentary about those conversations," said the spokesperson.

Foreign news reports and China's own state-run media, however, have reflected growing signs that Google could soon acknowledge that its effort to free up its Chinese website faces a deadlock and the company will prepare to shut it down.

A critical commentary on the website of the official Xinhua news agency appeared to assume that Google's pull-back was a certainty.

"The planet won't stop spinning because Google leaves, and Chinese Internet users will still remain online without Google," said the Chinese-language comment issued on Sunday.

"In the past, China's Internet developed very well without Google, and we can be sure that in the future, it will also develop in the same healthy way without

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What Does the Achilles Tendon Do?

The injury sustained to soccer star David Beckham's left foot has fans worried the athlete will miss the World Cup, but injuries to the Achilles tendon are no stranger to athletes and the less-conditioned "week-end warriors" alike.

The Achilles tendon is a band of fibrous tissue that connects the calf muscle to the heel bone, according to the Mayo Clinic. You use this tendon in practically every activity that involves moving your

foot, from walking and running to jumping and standing on tip-toe. It's also the largest tendon in your body, and can withstand more than 1,000 pounds of force, according to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS).

Injuries can range from irritation to full on tears, or ruptures, of the tissue. While anyone who engages in activities that use the calf muscle can suffer an Achilles injury, they are most common in so-called "weekend warriors," people who aren't accustomed to regular exercise and might not take the time to properly stretch and warm up, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

A number of activities can put stress on your Achilles and set off an injury, such as stair-climbing, hill-running or a sudden contraction of your calf muscle during a sprint, the AAOS says. The Achilles also tends to weaken with age.

A ruptured Achilles can sometimes feel like a snap in your lower leg accompanied by a sharp pain, akin to being kicked or even shot, the Mayo Clinic says.

Treatment for tears involves either wearing a cast or having surgery (as Beckham is reportedly having) to repair the tissue, along with rehabilitation. Most people can get back to their regular level of activity within four to six months, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Google."

The New York Times reported on Monday that Google's online partners in China had received a government notice on what to do if censoring stops, warning them not to follow the U.S. company's example.

China obliges Internet operators to block words and images the ruling Communist Party deems unacceptable.

Internationally popular websites Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are entirely blocked in China, which uses a filtering "firewall" to block Internet users from other overseas website content banned by authorities.

Google is likely to move in careful steps intended to minimize any risks and disruption to its staff and continued activities in China, said Natkin, the industry consultant.

"Google is very sensitive to protecting its people, and making decisions in a way that will limit the impact on them," he said.

HEALTH

Can the Sunshine Vitamin Ease Fibromyalgia Pain?



Vitamin D is known as the sunshine vitamin because when sunlight hits skin, the body produces this vitamin, essential for strong, healthy bones. (That's the reason your mother told you to slurp down your vitamin D-fortified milk.)

However, a mountain of new evidence suggests that the vitamin may have a more versatile role than previously thought, particularly when it comes to maintaining a healthy immune system and boosting mood.

Low levels have been associated with more severe asthma, colds, seasonal affective disorder, depression, and even chronic pain or fibromyalgia.

So does that mean that taking more vitamin D (or spending a bit more time in the sun) can combat fibromyalgia? Not just yet.

Studies have found that pain patients, including those with fibromyalgia, are more likely to be vitamin D deficient than their pain-free peers. However, it's not clear which came first; people in pain may get less sun (presumably because they may be more likely to stay inside, due to pain), which could lead to a vitamin D deficiency, rather than vice versa—a vitamin D deficiency leading to pain.

And it's also not clear if making sure you have adequate levels of the vitamin will help relieve pain or other fibromyalgia symptoms, such

as lack of energy or difficulty sleeping.

What's known about vitamin D

Our bodies make vitamin D naturally when exposed to sunlight. It only takes 10 to 15 minutes a day outside (without sunscreen) to make an adequate amount, but according to studies, about half of adults and 70% of children don't get enough. In a 2003 study, 93% of pain patients had low levels of vitamin D. The current dietary reference intake for people up to age 50 is 200 international units (IU) per day of vitamin D. Adults ages 51 to 70 need 400 IU/day, and those older than 70 need 600 IU/day, with an upper limit of 2,000 IU/day deemed safe.

But some experts suggest raising that upper limit. Toxicity levels, they say, are closer to 10,000 IU/day, and 2,000 may be closer to the baseline of what healthy bodies need. Current recommendations were established by the Institute of Medicine in 1997 to promote optimal bone health and are under review to possibly be revised in the summer of 2010.

Screening for vitamin D deficiency is as easy as a blood test, and deficiency can be righted with a few minutes of sunscreen-free time in the sun, supplemental pills, or by incorporating foods like eggs, mushrooms, and salmon—all natural carriers of vitamin D—into a healthy diet.

Getting vitamin D from

natural sources can stop you from getting too much of the vitamin, since the body makes only what it needs.

Although it's hard to overdose on vitamin D, it is possible if you take megadoses of the vitamin, which can cause hypercalcemia, an above-average concentration of calcium in the blood that can lead to kidney failure and nervous system problems, and hyperphosphatemia, an increase in levels of phosphates in the blood, which can affect bone density and increase the risk of osteoporosis.

Many who lack vitamin D—especially during the dark and dreary winter months when sunlight isn't abundant—do turn to supplements.

Tip: Having an Epidural

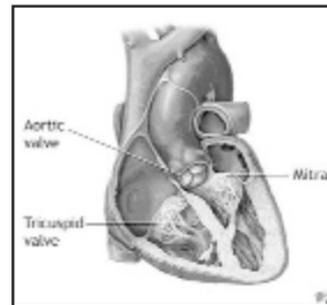
For some women, there are risks

An epidural is an injected anesthetic often used during labor and delivery to ease the pain of childbirth.

The Nemours Foundation mentions these possible risks of an epidural:

- * Increased difficulty pushing during labor (although a doctor can adjust the medication)
- * A drop in the mother's blood pressure.
- * Headache.
- * Rarely, problems urinating for the mother.
- * Some bleeding in the mother.
- * Slow heartbeat in the fetus.

Abbott's heart valve device proves safe, effective



ATLANTA – An experimental, minimally invasive technique to repair the most common type of heart valve problem proved to be far safer and nearly as effective as open heart surgery, meeting the primary goals of a pivotal study, researchers said on Sunday.

Abbott Laboratories is hoping to use the data to win U.S. approval for the mitral valve repair device. Its MitraClip has been available in Europe for about 18 months.

In the first large trial of its kind, researchers compared the Abbott device -- delivered to the heart via a catheter through a blood vessel in the leg -- with open heart surgery to treat mitral regurgitation, or MR.

The primary safety goal of the study compared the number of major adverse events -- a composite of 12, including major stroke, re-operation of mitral valve, urgent cardiovascular surgery, heart attack, kidney failure, major bleeding, and death -- at 30 days.

Among patients who received the MitraClip, 9.6 percent suffered major adverse events compared with 57 percent in the surgery group, a difference considered to be highly statistically significant. In the surgery group, 42 of the 55 adverse events were major bleeding, researchers said.

MR, which affects more than 8 million people in the United States and Europe, is marked by a faulty mitral valve that does not close tightly enough, allowing blood to flow backward in the heart. MR is a debilitating condition in which the heart's ability to function deteriorates over time, and can lead to irregular heartbeat, heart failure, stroke, heart attack or death.

Effectiveness was measured by the lack of need for surgery for valve dysfunction at one year. Moderate to severe MR in patients with initial successful treatment and death were also measures of

efficacy.

The device attained the effectiveness goal in 72.4 percent of patients compared with 87.8 percent among surgery patients -- falling within pre-specified parameters of non-inferiority, researchers said.

"This is a stunning difference in safety for an acceptable trade-off in efficacy for many patients," said Dr. Ted Feldman, director of the cardiac catheterization laboratory at NorthShore University HealthSystem and co-principal investigator of the trial.

Under the trial's design, the MitraClip was meant to show superiority to surgery on safety but only non-inferiority on effectiveness.

"If a patient does not have success with the (device), he can still have surgery. The real take-home message from this is that this procedure gives patients another option," said Feldman, who presented the data at the American College of Cardiology scientific meeting in Atlanta.

At one year, patients with significant MR who received the MitraClip, demonstrated improvements in heart function, quality of life, and normal physical activity. They also reported a decrease in cardiac symptoms.

The repair device, which Abbott added to its portfolio with its acquisition of Evalve Inc last year, works by clipping together the leaflets of the mitral valve, one of four valves in the heart.

More than 250,000 cases of significant MR are diagnosed in the United States each year and analysts believe the device could win U.S. approval next year and become a \$1 billion a year product for Abbott.

The Abbott-sponsored trial, dubbed EVEREST II, randomized 279 patients with moderate-to-severe or severe MR into two groups with 184 receiving the MitraClip and 95 undergoing surgery, the current standard of care.

Patients who received the device also demonstrated a reduction in severity of MR, an improvement in heart function and symptoms, as well as an improvement in physical and mental quality of life.

It's official: Aruba Says



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CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1 Picture book
 - 6 "Eureka!" moments
 - 10 "Oh, why not!"
 - 14 March composer John Philip
 - 15 Separate
 - 16 Way out
 - 17 "Rags to riches" author Horatio
 - 18 Broadway offering
 - 19 Columbus's smallest ship
 - 20 Faux (blunder)
 - 21 Former senator and retired basketball star (2 words)
 - 24 Lowest part of a ship's hull
 - 26 Worry too much
 - 27 Oliver Hardy's film partner, Stan
 - 29 Of sound mind
 - 31 Annapolis monogram
 - 32 October birthstone
 - 34 Typical domestic cat
 - 39 Faxed
 - 40 Synthetic fabric
 - 42 Clinton's vice president
 - 43 Isaac who composed the theme from Shaft
 - 45 Spreadable substitute
 - 46 Cain's victim
 - 47 Posing no problem
 - 49 Of the clan
 - 51 Soak up
 - 55 Stadium
 - 56 The Fabulous Baker Boys co-star (2 words)
 - 59 Pioneering color TV brand
 - 62 Garfunkel and Linkletter
 - 63 Fragrance
 - 64 Spoken for
 - 66 Skirt opening
 - 67 Sheryl Crow's "Wanna Do" (2 words)
 - 68 Happening
 - 69 Egg layers
 - 70 Profound
 - 71 Pub game
 - DOWN**
 - 1 "At once!" (abbr.)
 - 2 Damn Yankees heroine
 - 3 Elmer Fudd's quarry (2 words)
 - 4 only as directed
 - 5 Michelangelo's sculpting medium
 - 6 Eve's offer to Adam
 - 7 Corridor
 - 8 Saudi, for one
 - 9 Sophie's Choice author William
 - 10 Gives temporarily
 - 11 Napoleon's sentence
 - 12 Prongs
 - 13 Corset stiffeners
 - 22 Tundra shelter
 - 23 Aid, as in a heist
 - 25 Furious
 - 27 Lavish
 - 28 Sailing
 - 29 Oscar winning actress Field
 - 30 Skin lotion ingredient
 - 33 Experts
 - 35 At least twice
 - 36 The Price Is Right host (2 words)
 - 37 La Tar Pits
 - 38 Holler
 - 41 Dame
 - 44 Balkan resident
 - 48 In foreign lands
 - 50 Took a breather
 - 51 Embarrass
 - 52 "Uncle Miltie"
 - 53 Lustrous fabric
 - 54 Removes from office
 - 55 "Get ___!" ("Calm down!", 2 words)
 - 57 Run in neutral
 - 58 Runner-up in 1996
 - 60 Penny
 - 61 Unwelcome houseguests
 - 65 Actress Gardner

B-Hive

#58

57 Tootsy Talk

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Friday's answer

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Sudoku

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SOLUTION

8	1	5	6	9	3	7	2	4
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7	6	4	5	6	3	2	8	1
2	1	5	2	6	8	4	7	3
9	8	1	7	3	5	8	2	6
6	7	3	8	4	1	2	5	9
4	8	9	2	7	6	1	3	5

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

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CLASSIFIEDS

Calvin Klein parent to buy Tommy Hilfiger for \$3B

NEW YORK CITY – Two iconic American clothing labels — preppy Tommy Hilfiger and classic Calvin Klein — are coming together under one roof after Phillips-Van Heusen said it will purchase Tommy Hilfiger for about \$3 billion in cash and stock.

The deal adds a prominent brand to Phillips-Van Heusen's

stable, which also includes Izod and Arrow. It's expected to help Phillips-Van Heusen introduce some of its brands overseas, where privately held Hilfiger is strong.

Phillips-Van Heusen, based in New York, said the combined company's revenue will total about \$4.6 billion.

Lawmakers press for action on China currency

WASHINGTON – President Barack Obama faced growing congressional pressure yesterday to get tough with China over its currency practices, one day after Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao brushed off accusations that Beijing was undervaluing its currency for an unfair trade advantage.

"The impact of China's currency manipulation on the U.S. economy cannot be overstated. Maintaining its currency at a devalued exchange rate provides a subsidy to Chinese companies and unfairly disadvantages foreign competitors," 130 lawmakers said in a letter to U.S. Secretary Timothy Geithner and Commerce Secretary Gary Locke.

Many economists estimate China's currency is undervalued by 25 to 40 percent, giving it a huge trade advantage by effectively subsidizing its exports and taxing its imports.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Sunday dismissed U.S. complaints about China's exchange rate, calling them counterproductive.

He also blamed Washington for a deterioration in U.S.-China ties because of U.S. weapon sales to Taiwan and President Barack Obama's meeting with Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

But the lawmakers' letter showed the pressure Obama faces to push China to revalue its currency, which many U.S. lawmakers believe is to blame for lost manufacturing jobs and the huge U.S. trade deficit with China.

"If the administration fails to act on this issue it will hold back our economic recovery and hurt the ability of American small businesses and manufacturers to increase their production, keep their doors open, and create jobs," said Representative Michael Michaud, a Maine Democrat

The secret to becoming THE ANSWER to your customer's needs, so they buy from you again and again

by Ken Varga



Hi, I am Ken Varga. I want to share with you some of the ideas, strategies, and principles that allowed me to build 35 businesses during my career.

By earnestly applying the ideas, you will learn how you too can build your business to success, while living an unhurried life, filled with family, friends, fun and a relaxed attitude.

In this Tip I'm going to write about a concept that when a potential customer is looking for a specific product, your company comes to their mind.

The concept is the "USP". USP is an abbreviation that stands for Unique Selling Proposition.

It simply means: your company offers your prospective customer a unique or distinctive benefit or advantage, above and beyond that of your competitor.

Our goal (you and I), with these marketing tips and everything else I write about and make available to you, is to make your business distinctive and unique in the mind of the

customer.

The USP is a way for the potential customer, or present customer, to see your business as offering them a superior benefit or advantage, that no other competitor offers them. It is something very valuable, very desirable, very important, very precious and meaningful to them that is not available to them anywhere else.

That's what the heart of the Unique Selling Proposition is about.

When I go to neighborhood parties or network gatherings, I get into a lot of conversations with business owners and professionals.

I ask them a simple question.

Can you tell me why your customers or clients buy from you instead of your competitors?

And guess what? Most of them don't really know the answer.

Let me make a very important point here.

If you don't know the answer to that question, it means one of two things: either: (1) you offer a customer a unique set of advantages or benefits, but you've never identified them yourself, or (2) you don't offer that customer an advantage or benefit and you're just lucky to be in business in the first place.

Trust me when I say this... if (2) is your answer, then you will constantly be losing customers to your competition.

Anytime your competition wants to offer your customer an advantage you don't offer, they can take that customer away from you.

The reason I charge \$5,000/hour when I do consulting work, is that I produce, and what I do produce is that Unique Selling Proposition, because then I get most of the customers from the competition.

I want to help you determine the most powerful advantage or benefit you can possibly offer a current or potential customer, so that it will be irrational for your customer to choose anyone but your business to deal with in the future.

Sound exciting? Here's how you do it...

You identify what advantage, benefit, result, or protection your customer wants the most.

You identify what they're not getting from potential competitors and what they're not getting from you.

And guess what? YOU offer it to them.

You don't just offer it to them quietly. You incorporate the fact that you are now offering them this unique advantage or benefit in everything you say, everything you do, and everything you print.

Well that's it for this Tip. In the next Tip, I'll continue on this concept and give you a few examples.

To your success,
Ken Varga
Ph: 888-682-2596; Fax: 888-682-2597
Email: ken@kenvarga.com
Website: www.kenvarga.com
...helping businesses increase customer acquisition by up to 32.7% in as little as 3 to 6 months, and increase customer retention by up to 90%.

Eurozone employment in record drop

BRUSSELS, Belgium – The number of people employed in the 16-nation eurozone fell by a record 2.7 million last year, as the economic crisis took its toll, official figures showed yesterday.

There were 347,000 fewer eurozone employees in the fourth quarter, according to the European Union statisticians Eurostat, a sign that the payroll losses were losing pace at least.

Employment fell by 2.721 million people in the eurozone last year, a drop of 1.8 percent, after a rise of 0.9 percent in 2008.

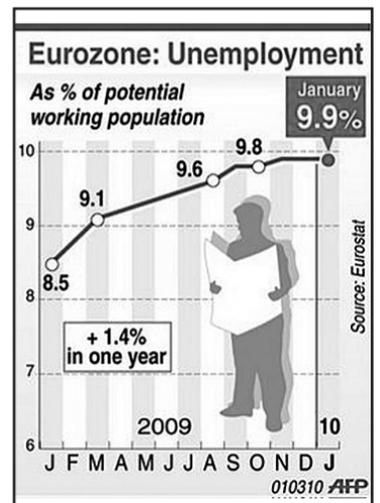
In the 27-nation EU as a whole, over 4.02 million fewer

people were in gainful employment.

In the fourth quarter of last year, the latest figures available, the number of manufacturing jobs fell by 1.1 percent in the eurozone while construction jobs were down by 0.4 percent.

On the plus side agricultural sector jobs were up 0.5 percent while there were 0.2 percent more public administration, health and education jobs.

Unemployment in the eurozone remained at 9.9 percent in January, providing more evidence that Europe's recovery from the worst recession in



decades is a largely jobless one.

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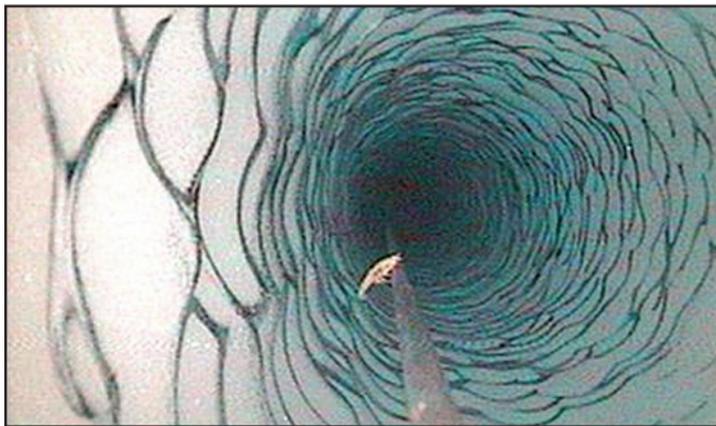
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NASA finds shrimp dinner on ice beneath Antarctica



This video frame grab image provided by NASA, shows a Lyssianasid amphipod, which is related to a shrimp,

WASHINGTON – In a surprising discovery about where higher life can thrive, scientists for the first time found a shrimp-like creature and a jellyfish frolicking beneath a massive Antarctic ice sheet.

Six hundred feet below the ice where no light shines, scientists had figured nothing much more than a few microbes could exist.

That's why a NASA team was surprised when they lowered a video camera to get the first long look at the underbelly of an ice sheet in Antarctica. A curious shrimp-like creature came swimming by and then parked itself on the camera's cable. Scientists also pulled up a tentacle they believe came from a foot-long jellyfish.

"We were operating on the presumption that nothing's there," said NASA ice scientist Robert Bindshadler, who will be presenting the initial findings and a video at an American Geophysical Union meeting Wednesday. "It was a shrimp you'd enjoy having on your plate."

"We were just gaga over it," he said of the 3-inch-long, orange critter starring in their two-minute video. Technically, it's not a shrimp. It's a Lyssianasid amphipod, which is distantly related to shrimp.

The video is likely to inspire experts to rethink what they know about life in harsh environments. And it has scientists musing that if shrimp-like creatures can frolic below 600 feet of Antarctic ice in subfreezing dark water, what about other hostile places? What about Europa, a frozen moon of Jupiter?

"They are looking at the equivalent of a drop of water in a swimming pool that you would expect nothing to be living in and they found not one animal but two," said biologist Stacy Kim of the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories in California, who joined the NASA team later. "We have no idea what's going on down there."

Microbiologist Cynan Ellis-Evans of the British Antarctic Survey called the finding intriguing.

"This is a first for the subglacial environment with that level of sophistication," Ellis-Evans said. He said there have been findings somewhat similar, showing complex life in retreating ice shelves, but nothing quite directly under the ice like this.

Ellis-Evans said it's possible the creatures swam in from far away and don't live there permanently.

But Kim, who is a co-author of the study, doubts it. The site in West Antarctica is at least 12 miles from open seas. Bindshadler drilled an 8-inch-wide hole and was looking at a tiny amount of water. That means it's unlikely that that two critters swam from great distances and were captured randomly in that small of an area, she said.

Yet scientists were puzzled at what the food source would be for these critters. While some microbes can make their own food out of chemicals in the ocean, complex life like the amphipod can't, Kim said.

So how do they survive? That's the key question, Kim said.

Crucifixion year bad for Bavarian village barbers

OBERAMMERGAU, Germany – Once every 10 years, this Bavarian village crucifies Jesus all over again and local hairdressers nearly go out of business.

That's because nearly half the 5,300-strong village lets both hair and beards grow for over a year to better resemble the Jews they will interpret in the Passion play which has been running here for nearly 375 years.

The tradition goes back to 1633 when the plague struck the Alpine village and locals vowed, if they were spared, to put on a play about the crucifixion and reincarnation of Jesus once every 10 years -- for ever.

"A lot of people, including some 600 children stop having their hair cut from Ash Wednesday (February 25) 2009 to October 3, 2010" when the play packs up for nine years, says Doris Renner, 51, who runs one of the village's three hairdressing shops.

"That means a tremendous loss of business and shorter working hours for some employees," she adds.

But "Jesus," for his part, is working overtime.

Frederik Mayet, 30, a marketing student, is both "Jesus" and spokesman for the play.

To take part in the "Pasion, you have to be born in the village, have lived here for 20 years, or be married to someone from the village for over 10 years," he says.

The "Passion" is the "social event of the decade," says play director Christian Stueckl.

"Some want to take part because it's a tradition. Others for religious reasons. Still others, who aren't at all religious, just don't want to miss out," according to Stueckl, a village native who usually runs the Munich Volkstheater.

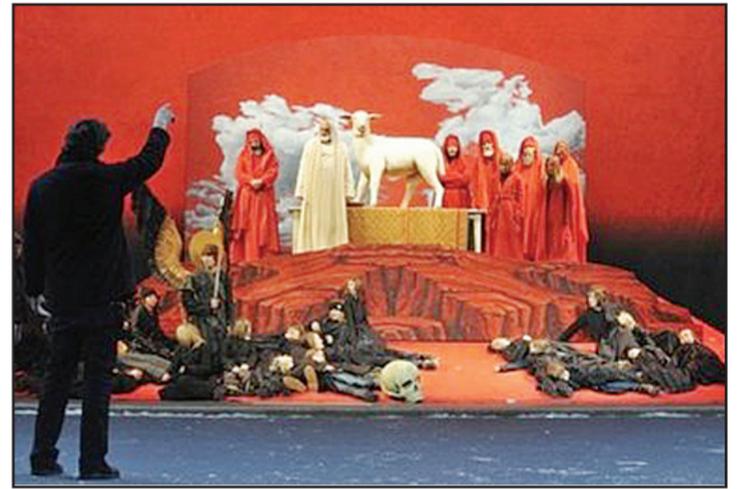
Villagers give up a lot of time to take part.

They will be playing to packed audiences in a made-to-purpose theatre, which can seat nearly 5,000, for five hours a day, five times a week, from May 15 to October 3 -- and that does not include rehearsals.

Nearly 1,000 villagers have acting roles -- for crowd scenes up to 900 at a time can gather on stage -- while others play in the orchestra, sing in the choir, sew costumes, or work backstage.

Donkeys, camels, sheep, goats, and doves will also be on hand.

-- Political edge to the Passion -- The Passion "is very important for tourism and eco-



Director Christian Stueckl (L) rehearses one of the many living tableaux in the Oberammergau Passion play

nomically" for the village, says mayor Arno Nunn, a former policeman who has only lived here for 12 years and is therefore excluded from the play.

"In 2000 we made net earnings of some 25 million euros (34 million dollars), and we hope for much the same this year,, according to the mayor who hopes for half a million spectators despite the fact that reservations are down because of the economic slump.

"Ordinary tickets are sold out, but only 75 percent of tickets sold in combination with hotel bookings have gone to date so we're hoping for a pick-up in last minute reservations," says Nunn who points to the importance of the foreign market as half the overseas' visitors are from Britain or the United States.

Choosing the actors is done at Easter, the year before the play, with names written up on a large board for all to see.

"Of course, sometimes people are disappointed they have not got the role they wanted", says Nunn. Town councillors used to decide who got what, but this year Stueckl made all the casting decisions and the town hall, which had a veto right for the top roles, went along with them.

"I was euphoric when it was announced I would be Jesus," said Mayet, a Catholic.

"Everyone in the village came to clap me on the back to congratulate me. It's a great honour," he added.

But there has always been a political edge to the Passion.

Married people only won the right to take part in 1990 after going to court, while non-Christians, including Muslims, have only been included since 2000.

And big decisions regarding the play are still taken by village referendums.

"In the Middle Ages, such Passion plays often fanned anti-Jewish propaganda and there's been a lot of discussion

about anti-Jewishness in the play in the wake of the Third Reich" and Adolf Hitler, says Stueckl.

Last year rabbis from the US Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee came to discuss the production with Stueckl and Catholic experts.

"Such exchanges are important and help improve the play" which is spoken in German, says Stueckl.

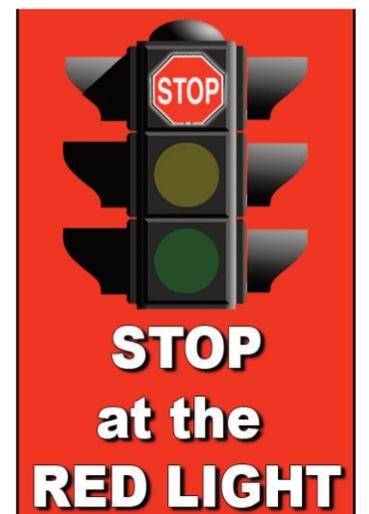
Rabbi Eric Greenberg of the Anti-Defamation League welcomes changes away from "ancient negative stereotypes of Judaism and Jews," but still has concerns about some of the visual images in the play and over how responsibility for crucifying Jesus is shared out between Pontius Pilate and the Jewish High Priests.

As for "Judas," he's played this year by a Protestant, Carsten Lueck, 40, who normally works on stage construction for television and theatres.

"Of course one feels a little more religious when one takes part in the play because we spend a lot of time reading up on theology and the Bible," he says.

"The worst part is growing the beard. I'll be rid of it as soon as the play's over," he says.

Renner's hairdressing shop plans to open late Sunday on October 3.



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Edwards mistress: 'We love each other very much'



Aug. 6, 2009 file photo shows Rielle Hunter leaving the Terry Sanford Federal Building and Courthouse in Raleigh, N.C.

RALEIGH, North Carolina — John Edwards' mistress Rielle Hunter said in an interview released yesterday they are still in love, even if their relationship turned into something "different" around the time he acknowledged the affair in 2008.

Hunter said that the two immediately had a connection when they met at a New York City hotel in 2006. She didn't describe the details of their relationship but said he is a great father who wants to be there full-time for their daughter, now 2.

"We love each other very much. And that hasn't changed, and I believe that will be till death do us part," she said. She added that "our connection is profound."

Hunter recalled the first night she met Edwards in New York, saying she knew that she was a special person to him.

"He in fact did say to me the first night, 'Falling in love with you could really (expletive) up my plans for becoming President,'" she said.

Hunter said she told him he

shouldn't run for the White House and suggested he at least wait until April 2007 because her intuition and astrology suggested he would have a difficult first three months of the year. Elizabeth Edwards' cancer returned in March of that year. Hunter said John Edwards wanted to exit the race but that Elizabeth Edwards wanted him to stay in.

"And my surprise was that they stayed in the race," Hunter said. "I was shocked. I really viewed it as reckless."

John and Elizabeth Edwards are now separated. Hunter said the affair ended in July 2008 and that the relationship is now something "different."

Edwards hired Hunter to work as a campaign videographer in 2006 as he plotted his second run for president. The former North Carolina senator's political action committee paid her video production firm more than \$100,000.

Federal investigators have been looking into Edwards' campaign finances, with former aide Andrew Young saying a grand jury questioned him for hours about the large sums of money that changed hands during the period that he helped cover up the affair.

Hunter said they questioned her about Young and about her relationship with Edwards, who she refers to as "Johnny."

"They asked a lot of questions about the sex tape," she said. Hunter has sued Young for invasion of privacy, seeking the return of a videotape that he describes as Edwards and Hunter in a sexual encounter. Young said in a statement that he has a lot of empathy for what Hunter is going through.

"I hope she and Johnny and Elizabeth and their families can find happiness so that we all can move on with our lives," he said.

An attorney for Hunter and a spokeswoman for John Edwards declined to comment. An attorney for Elizabeth Edwards did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Slim a maverick tycoon in Mexico's business elite

MEXICO CITY, Mexico — Carlos Slim, the world's richest man according to Forbes, has created hundreds of thousands of jobs in Mexico, but he also is seen to typify a business elite that amassed fortunes by exploiting the poor.

Slim, whose Telmex and America Movil companies dominate Mexico's telephone industry and have helped him build a \$53.5 billion fortune, was named the world's wealthiest tycoon by the business magazine last week.

In a country where homes made of sheet metal and cardboard sit in the shadows of flashy apartment buildings, Slim, 70, personifies the yawning gap between Mexico's small wealthy class and its millions of impoverished residents.

"He owns Telmex, he's the owner of all of Mexico. It's very ironic that as a country we don't have the same economic growth," said Veronica Delgado, an architect shopping at one of Slim's gift stores in a well-to-do Mexico City neighborhood.

Like many developing nations, Mexico suffers from a weak education system, shoddy healthcare services, rampant corruption and a shortage of high-quality jobs. One in five Mexicans does not earn enough to eat properly, and half of all adults never progress beyond primary school.

But Mexico also boasts a significant upper class that drives flashy sports cars, lives in swank neighborhoods and sends its children to the United States to be educated.

The gap between rich and poor is wider in Mexico than in more developed countries like the United States and Canada, although it has narrowed slightly over the past decade, according to data from the World Bank and United Nations.

While Mexicans joke that it is impossible to go a day without paying Slim, his companies have grown over decades to employ 270,000 people, including 35,000 jobs created last year as the economy battled the worst recession since the 1930s.

Slim's far-flung business empire includes some of Mexico's best-known department stores, hotels, restaurants, oil drilling, building firms and the Inbursa bank.

Since acquiring Mexico's state telephone company in a 1990 privatization, he has been accused of trying to maintain a



Lebanon's President Michel Suleiman (L) shakes hands with Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim of Lebanese origin as he offers him a medal after their meeting at the Presidential palace in Baabda, near Beirut March 12, 2010

monopoly and of charging unreasonably high prices that have made it harder for small companies to expand.

"He's a businessman with a lot of vision ... Good for him, but the fact that he's the world's richest man doesn't help me," said Heriberto Gonzalez, a taco seller paying his monthly phone bill at a Telmex store in Mexico City.

A poll published on Monday by the newspaper Milenio showed Mexicans were divided on whether Slim deserved his fortune, with about a third saying he had earned it and slightly fewer saying it was due to connections with powerful officials.

No jets, no yachts

Mexico's rich fawn over Slim, but his fortune contrasts with a low-key lifestyle.

He has lived in the same house for about 40 years and drives an aging Mercedes Benz, while eschewing private jets, yachts and the other luxuries popular among Mexico's super-wealthy.

At the end of a recent glitzy event in Mexico City he was seen strolling away with a bodyguard while other wealthy attendees waited for their chauffeured automobiles.

But the heyday of Slim's telecommunications empire is passing as competition in the industry slowly picks up due to improving technology -- Telmex controls 80 percent of Mexico's fixed lines and America Movil has more than 70 percent of the wireless market.

Slim was not the only Mexican to make the Forbes list of billionaires.

Also on it was Ricardo Salinas, who built his fortune selling furniture and appliances to low-income Mexicans, offering credit at interest rates

above 60 percent and sending motorcycle couriers to their homes to collect weekly payments.

Other Mexican billionaires include German Larrea Mota, owner of copper miner Grupo Mexico, Televisa broadcasting tycoon Emilio Azcarraga, supermarket operator Jeronimo Arango and banker Roberto Hernandez.

To the ire of Mexico's government, the country's No. 1 drug lord fugitive, Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman, is also on the list.

In recent years, Slim has become more involved in combating poverty, illiteracy and poor healthcare in Latin America, while promoting soccer, boxing and other sports projects for the poor. His foundations donated more than \$600 million in 2009.

Slim, who is far less charitable than Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates or billionaire investor Warren Buffett, has said that creating jobs is the best way for businessmen to combat poverty.

Gates' \$53 billion fortune would be worth more than \$80 billion if he had not given much of his money to charity, according to Forbes.

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Reynolds agrees to three-year pact

Locking up another young player, the D-backs have agreed to terms with third baseman Mark Reynolds on a three-year deal, a baseball source told MLB.com on Monday.

The deal, according to The Arizona Republic, will reportedly net the 26-year-old Reynolds \$14.5 million over the life of the contract, with an \$11 million club option for 2013.

The D-backs have not confirmed the deal.

The pact reportedly breaks down like this: Reynolds will receive a \$1 million signing bonus and earn \$500,000 this season. He will then make \$5 million in 2011 and \$7.5 million in '12. The club can also choose to buy out the 2013 option for \$500,000.

This deal, which had been reportedly in the works for weeks, brings security to Reynolds and removes the possibility of arbitration dur-

ing any of the three seasons.

The pact marks the second major signing for the D-backs this month. On March 3, Arizona signed outfielder Justin Upton to a six-year deal.

Reynolds, who broke out with 44 home runs and 102 RBIs in 2009, just missed Super Two status last season, meaning the club was able to set his salary for '10 until an extension was done. The right-handed-hitting Reynolds also broke his own single-season strikeout record with 223 last season. The previous record was 204 in 2008.

Reynolds made his Major League debut with Arizona in 2007, just three years after being a third-round Draft choice out of Virginia. He drove in 62 runs that season, finishing his rookie year with a .279 batting average. Known for his power, Reynolds has hit 89 home runs in his first three seasons.

Plans change for Wood's return

PHOENIX -- It could be something, it could be nothing. But the plans for Indians closer Kerry Wood, scratched from his scheduled appearance in a Cactus League game Saturday because of soreness in his right lat muscle, to go back to work have changed.

Wood was expected to throw a bullpen session Monday and appear against the Reds on Wednesday. That was the word from Wood himself, anyway.

But on Monday, manager Manny Acta announced that Wood did not throw that bullpen, and Acta did not offer a timetable for Wood's return to exhibition action.

"We're going to take it easy with Kerry," Acta said. "The medical staff will put together a plan for him. We want to be careful. He's our closer. He has plenty of time to get ready, and there's no reason to rush him back out there."

It bears repeating that this could simply be a little spring soreness that will go away with extra rest. That was the case when Wood experienced similar soreness early in camp last year.

But given Wood's lengthy and well-documented injury history, red flags immediately go up whenever he is unable to take the ball, as scheduled. To this point, Wood, who saved 20 games in 26 opportunities for the Tribe last year, has appeared in two Cactus games, working two scoreless innings.

In other injury news, left-hander Jeremy Sowers is expected to make his Cactus debut Thursday against the Reds, working two innings. Sowers has been counted out of the rotation race because of the left shoulder soreness that has him behind in camp. Because he is out of Minor League options, and the Indians value him as a potential starting alternative, it appears likely Sowers will open the season on the disabled list so that he can be sufficiently stretched out.

Shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera, nursing a strained left groin, is taking dry swings and is not expected to return to Cactus action until late this week, at the earliest

NHL Standings

EASTERN CONF.			
Atlantic	W	L	Pts
Pittsburgh	40	22	85
New Jersey	40	23	83
Philadelphia	36	27	76
NY Rangers	30	29	69
NY Islanders	27	32	63
Northeast			
Buffalo	36	20	82
Ottawa	37	26	79
Montreal	35	29	76
Boston	30	24	72
Toronto	23	33	58
Southeast			
Washington	45	13	99
Atlanta	28	28	68
Tampa Bay	28	27	66
Florida	28	29	66
Carolina	28	31	64

WESTERN CONF.			
Central	W	L	Pts
Chicago	44	18	93
Nashville	37	26	79
Detroit	33	23	78
St. Louis	32	26	73
Columbus	27	31	65
Northwest			
Vancouver	42	23	87
Colorado	38	23	82
Calgary	34	24	77
Minnesota	32	29	70
Edmonton	21	40	49
Pacific			
San Jose	43	14	96
Phoenix	41	22	87
Los Angeles	40	22	85
Dallas	29	25	71
Anaheim	30	29	68

NBA Standings

EASTERN CONF.					
Atlantic	W	L	Pct	GB	
Boston	41	23	.641	--	
Toronto	32	32	.500	9.0	
Phila.	23	42	.354	18.5	
N.York	23	43	.348	19.0	
N.Jersey	7	59	.106	35.0	
Central					
x-Cleveland	51	15	.773	--	
Milwaukee	35	29	.547	15.0	
Chicago	31	34	.477	19.5	
Detroit	23	43	.348	28.0	
Indiana	21	44	.323	29.5	
Southeast					
Orlando	47	20	.701	--	
Atlanta	42	23	.646	4.0	
Charlotte	33	31	.516	12.5	
Miami	34	32	.515	12.5	
Wash.	21	43	.328	24.5	

WESTERN CONF.					
Southwest	W	L	Pct	GB	
Dallas	45	22	.672	--	
San Ant.	39	25	.609	4.5	
Memphis	35	32	.522	10.0	
Houston	33	31	.516	10.5	
N.Orleans	32	34	.485	12.5	
Northwest					
Denver	45	21	.672	--	
Utah	42	22	.656	2.5	
Okl. City	40	24	.619	4.0	
Portland	40	28	.582	6.0	
Minn.	14	51	.215	31.0	
Pacific					
LA Lakers	48	18	.727	--	
Phoenix	40	26	.606	8.0	
LA Clippers	25	42	.373	23.5	
Sacra.	22	44	.333	26.0	
Golden St.	18	47	.277	29.5	

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PG	ALICE IN WONDERLAND	
	daily: 6:00 8:30	
NEW	matinee: 1:00 3:30	late show: 11:00

PG-13	THE LOVELY BONES	
	daily: 5:30 8:30	
	matinee:	late show: 11:30

R	EDGE OF DARKNESS	
	daily: 4:30 7:00 9:30	
	matinee: 2:00	late show: 12:00

PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	
	daily:	
	matinee: 12:55 3:15	late show:

PG	VALENTINE'S DAY	
	daily: 6:30 9:00	
	matinee: 12:45 3:45	late show: 11:45

R	THE WOLFMAN	
	daily: 6:00 8:45	
	matinee: 12:15 3:00	late show: 11:30

PG-13	THE FOURTH KIND	
	daily: 4:15 6:45 9:15	
	matinee: 1:30	late show: 11:45

AT PASEO HERENCIA

R	SHUTTER ISLAND	NEW
	daily: 5:30 8:30	
	matinee: 2:30	late show: 11:30

PG-13	DEAR JOHN	
	daily: 4:00 6:30 9:00	
	matinee: 1:30	late show: 11:30

PG	PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS	
	daily: 5:30 8:15	
	matinee: 12:00 2:45	late show: 11:00

PG	EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES	
	daily: 6:00 8:45	
	matinee: 1:00 3:30	late show: 11:15

R	FROM PARIS WITH LOVE	
	daily: 4:00 6:15 8:30	
	matinee: 1:45	late show: 11:00

PG-13	AVATAR	
	daily: 4:45 8:00	
	matinee: 1:30	late show: 11:15

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On the road to 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa

US to play Australia in South Africa on June 5

CHICAGO —The United States will play Australia in an exhibition in South Africa on June 5, the Americans' final game before their World Cup opener against England a week later.

The match will be played at Ruimsig Stadium in the Johannesburg suburb of Roodepoort, the U.S.

Soccer Federation said Monday. It will be only the third matchup between the nations following a 1-0 Australia victory at Orlando, Fla., in June 1992, and a 1-1 tie at San Jose, Calif., in November 1998.

The game could produce a matchup of U.S. attacker Clint Dempsey facing his Fulham teammate, goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, and American goalkeeper Tim Howard and midfielder Landon Donovan going against Tim Cahill, their teammate on Everton this season.

It also involves rival nations trying to win rights to

host the 2018 or 2022 World Cup.

The 18th-ranked U.S. plays the No. 25 Czech Republic at East Hartford, Conn., on May 25 and meets No. 41 Turkey four days later at Philadelphia before traveling to South Africa, where the Americans are in a first-round group with eighth-ranked England (June 12), 27th-ranked Slovenia (June 18) and 32nd-ranked Algeria (June 23).

Australia, ranked 23rd, is in a first-round group with fifth-ranked Germany (June 13), 28th-ranked Ghana (June 19) and 13th-ranked Serbia (June 23).

Did you know?

Soccer City in Johannesburg, which will host the opening match at the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™ as well as the Final, was built in 1987 and was originally known as the FNB Stadium, but it has undergone a major upgrade ahead of this year's showpiece.

Located in the southwest of the city, it is only a short distance from the football-crazy township of Soweto. It hosted the first mass rally of Nelson Mandela following his release from prison in 1990 and staged the 1996 CAF Africa Cup of Nations final in which South Africa beat Tunisia.

The stadium's capacity is being raised from 80,000 to 94,700 for the tournament. The ground's design is inspired by the iconic African pot known as the calabash.

Ghana Coach Milovan Rajevac Prefers Experience Over Youth

Ghana coach Milovan Rajevac has said although his youngsters did an excellent job at the African Cup of Nations, the World Cup terrain is different and will depend more on experienced players.

"You are now talking about experience, and that is valuable for us. Those players are part of our plans, they are key to our ambitions," he said in a Ghanasoccernet.com report.

"Yes, some might say the youngsters did well in Angola, but the reality is, at the World Cup, you need a lot of

experience, you need guys who are going to be able to deal with the pressure.

"We need to mix youth and experience and find the right balance. By that, I mean we must continue using the youngsters but they need guidance, they need people around them who will be able to deal with pressure and that is where players like [Michael] Essien, [John] Mensah and [Stephen] Appiah come in."

Ghana is paired with Serbia, Australia and Germany in Group D at the World Cup finals.

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We're going through a difficult time, admits Domenech

PARIS - The French national football side is going through a difficult period in terms of replacing the older generation with younger players, admitted under-fire coach Raymond Domenech Monday.

The 58-year-old - whose popularity has plummeted since guiding the French to the 2006 World Cup final - insisted, though, that he was getting a firmer idea of the makeup of his 23 man squad for the World Cup finals in South Africa, which runs from June 11 to July 11.

"There is a changing of the generations taking place," said Domenech, who was capped eight times as full-back from 1973-79.

"Apart from Brazil, who have an immense reservoir of talent, which assures them of a natural renewal without the team suffering the consequences, all the other teams function cyclically.

"We find ourselves in a rather more difficult cycle, with senior players who are either worn out or retired and who we have to replace. At

the moment we are working hard on grappling to rediscover a high level."

Domenech, who was coach of the Under-21 side from 1993-2004 before replacing Jacques Santini at the helm of the senior national side, said that it was harder for him this time to have a firmer idea of what the final squad would be.

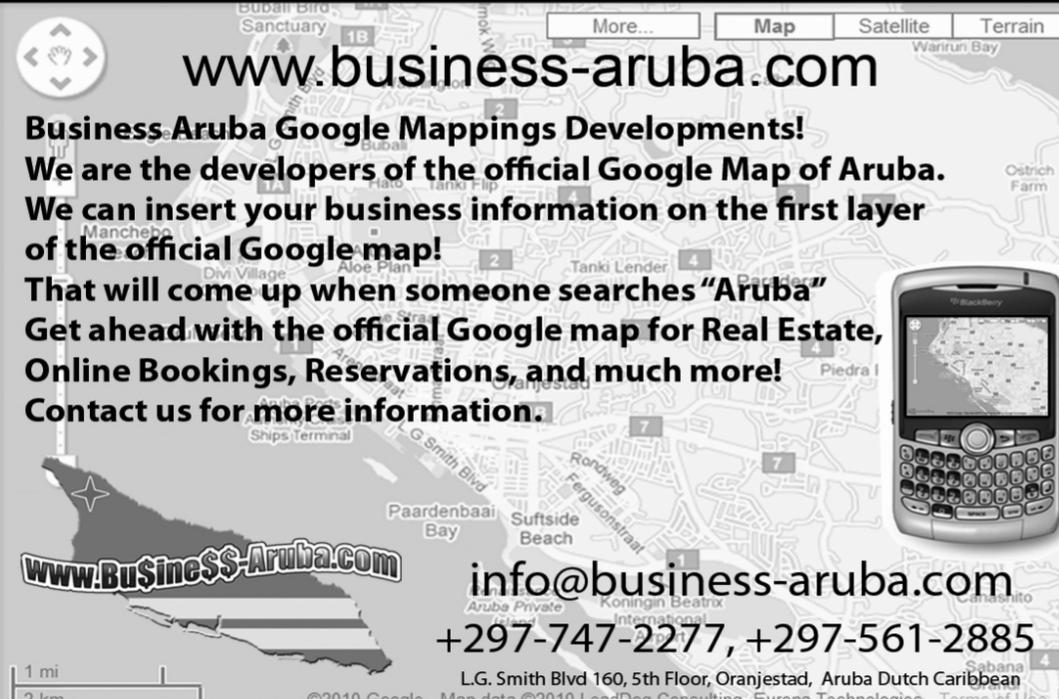
"At the moment my team is coming together, but there are still too many uncertainties and too many things affecting them outside of football that is polluting the process of my selection.

"When we have got the players back together again and we have spent enough time together then I will know what the squad should be."

Domenech insisted the huge amount of criticism he has come under, since France crashed out in humiliating fashion in the first round of the Euro 2008 finals and an unimpressive qualifying campaign for the World Cup finals, didn't bother him.

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Beckham to miss World Cup after injury



Beckham would stay in Finland overnight and could travel to either England or Italy either on Tuesday or Wednesday, Orava said. Earlier England manager Fabio Capello commented: "I spoke with him after the game on Sunday night to offer my support. "David is a great professional and has worked very hard to be ready for the World Cup, so missing it will be a big blow."

Capello later tried to give Beckham some encouragement by saying the player was in his thoughts for England's UEFA EURO 2012 qualifying campaign, which is due to start in September. "I hope he will be fit for the Euros because he is always one of the best players," said Capello.

Beckham speaking before Monday's operation said he hoped to make a swift and

full recovery. "I am on my way to Finland to see a specialist and have a scan on the injury," he said. "I am upset but want to thank everyone for their messages of support. I hope to make a swift and full recovery."

Welcome back at Milan AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani said that the player will be out for five or six months. "I saw him and he was suffering," Galliani added. "In the dressing room, I took him in my arms and told him that if he wanted, he will be with us next year."

Beckham had admitted earlier on Sunday he was far from certain to win a place in England's squad for the 2010 finals. He was an unused substitute in England's recent friendly win over Egypt as Capello opted to look at Theo Walcott and Shaun Wright-

Phillips on the right wing.

He joined AC Milan on loan in January in an attempt to convince Capello he could still make an impact at the highest level, but he has been left on the bench several times during his spell at the San Siro. An injury crisis at the club, however, meant he was handed a rare start on Sunday only to suffer the major injury.

Beckham is England's most-capped outfield player with 115 caps. The injury could be the final twist in his football career but Beckham's former Manchester United team-mate Andy Cole said the free-kick specialist would not want to retire in such circumstances. "He'll come back from the injury, I don't think he'll want to retire on this note," former England striker Cole said.

The surgeon who operated on David Beckham's ruptured Achilles tendon in Finland on Monday ruled out any possibility of the England star recovering in time for the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa.

"The operation was done, it went well and it will take many months for him to recover," said Sakari Orava.

He added there was "no chance" of Beckham making the 11 June -11 July showpiece in South Africa for what would have been an English record fourth finals

appearance. "That is quite clear," Orava said.

Beckham twisted his left ankle during the final minutes of an AC Milan Serie A game against Chievo at the San Siro on Sunday and limped off the field before being stretchered away in pain and in tears. The 34-year-old midfielder flew to the western Finnish city of Turku in a private plane on Monday and was walking on crutches when he arrived at the sports injury clinic of Mehilainen hospital, where Orava operated on him.



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